

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 134

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 157

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 134—Relative to Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 19, 2008.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 134, DeSaulnier. Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment.

This measure would establish the Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment, consisting of specified members. The measure would require the task force to take various actions related to studying ways to provide summer enrichment and wellness programs to low-income children, as provided.

WHEREAS, All children need and deserve safe, enriching, and fun activities during the summer months; and

WHEREAS, Summer vacation should be a time for children to visit new places, to swim and play outside, and to learn new skills. For many California children, though, summertime means long days inside or out on the streets, a lack of supervised activity, no nutritious food, and little exercise. In addition, research finds that over the summer, many children lose some of the academic gains they made over the previous school year; and

WHEREAS, Many children in California rely on their schools for nutritious meals and physical activity, as well as academics. Unfortunately, most of this good programming comes to an end in June, with the end of the school year, or at the end of a session in year-round school. Without active recreational activities and healthy food, many children will continue on the road to obesity, leading to an increased risk for becoming obese adults and for developing chronic, serious, and costly medical problems, such as diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers. Without engaging activities and adult supervision and mentorship during the summer months, many children will be in unsafe situations, and some will be more likely to engage in criminal behavior; and

WHEREAS, Obesity and overweight can be consequences of a lack of nutritious food and lack of organized physical activity in the summertime. A recent study of children in kindergarten and first grade found that the average body mass index grew twice as fast during summer vacation as during the school year. Many children (over 70 percent of nutritionally needy children in the state) lack access to nutritious meals when schools are closed; and

WHEREAS, Children and youth without supervised summer activities are vulnerable to alcohol, drug, and tobacco use, to criminal behavior (as victims and perpetrators), and to injury and other safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, All children experience summer learning losses of approximately 2.6 months of math, when they do not have educational activities during the summer. Low-income children are disproportionately affected and experience greater summer learning losses than higher income children, leading to cumulative learning loss for lower income children over time; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment is hereby established, which shall consist of the following members:

(a) The Chair of the Assembly Committee on Health, or his or her designee.

(b) The Chair of the Senate Committee on Health, or his or her designee.

(c) Two Members of the Assembly, appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.

(d) Two Members of the Senate, appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules.

(e) Six members of the public, with three members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, and three members appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. These members shall be selected to reflect the demographic and geographic diversity of California. One Assembly appointee shall have expertise in child health care services. One Senate appointee shall have expertise in health insurance.

(f) The Governor shall be invited to appoint two members, one of whom shall be the State Public Health Officer, or his or her designee.

(g) The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall be invited to appoint one member who shall be an employee of the Department of Education with relevant policy experience; and be it further

Resolved, That state funds shall not be used to support task force activities, but that the task force may solicit funding from public and private foundations, and make use of available federal funds; and be it further

Resolved, That the task force shall study ways to provide a summer enrichment and wellness program to low-income children, including ways to leverage health insurance programs and health care services to support the program and shall assess the cost of the program; and be it further

Resolved, That the task force further shall study ways for the program to achieve the following objectives:

(a) To promote good health and to combat obesity by increasing education and awareness of the benefits of good nutrition and regular physical exercise and activity.

(b) To provide safe, supervised places for kids to be during the summer months.

(c) To provide enrichment activities and experiential learning that complement the school year curriculum, but offer other opportunities not found in school.

(d) To prevent summer learning loss among California's children; and be it further

Resolved, That the task force shall complete a report outlining its findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and shall print and distribute this report if private funds are secured for that purpose; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.